

# The News Scimitar

PUBLISHED BY THE MEMPHIS NEWS SCIMITAR COMPANY.

Entered as Second-Class Matter at the Postoffice at Memphis, Tenn., under Act of March 3, 1879.

DAILY EXCEPT SUNDAY  
MEMBER OF THE ASSOCIATED PRESS

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Give the Public a Chance to Decide.

While there may be some relief for the public from oppressive charges of the gas company through injunction or other procedure brought by private individuals, it is becoming more evident that there can be no permanent relief until the city owns its own gas and electric light plant and operates it on a basis of actual cost.

It is not for any official, individual or tool of the corporate interests to say that the people of Memphis shall or shall not own and operate their own gas and electric light plant.

The sentiment of the Memphis public regarding the outrageous charges made in November bills has been made evident during the past few days. That sentiment is such that the legislative delegation can not in good faith with the public decline to sponsor and pass through the legislature an enabling act, giving the people the right to determine for themselves whether they want a gas and electric light plant or not.

It is not within the province of any official or individual to set himself up as being above and immune from the wishes of the people in this or any other matter.

Our attitude on an enabling act permitting the people to decide for themselves if they desire a plant of their own, is in the same attitude as that we shall take regarding all other legislation involving the Shelby county. Not only are we willing for the people to express themselves, but we believe that it is the duty of every honest official to scrupulously observe their wishes in all matters.

We have been told that the time is not opportune for the people to consider the erection of a gas and electric light plant for the reason that there is pressing need for bond issues for streets, bridges and sewers; for the board of education; for the water department; and other enterprises. Perhaps there are those who would place the importance for a municipal gas and electric light plant above the need of some of the other enterprises that are seeking bond issues. It is for this reason that we suggest to the legislative delegation the propriety of requiring a referendum on the issuance of bonds for any cause whatsoever.

If the people do not desire a gas plant they should have an opportunity to vote down the project in a referendum election. They should have the same privilege regarding bonds for all other purposes. On the other hand they should have a right to determine for themselves if they shall have a gas plant or if additional bonds shall be issued for the water department, the proposed auditorium and for other purposes.

There is no indication that the utilities law will be repealed by the forthcoming legislature. Under ordinary circumstances we believe that the public utilities should be regulated by the municipal authorities, and that they should observe their franchise agreements. But the commission is too strongly entrenched at this time to expect the law to be repealed.

In justice to the utilities commission, it should be stated that it is not responsible for the 60 per cent increase in gas rates applied to Memphis. The present situation is directly attributable to an agreement reached between the city administration and the gas company. The utilities commission stated positively that it would consider no application for a change of rate for any public service corporation in Memphis that did not have the endorsement of the city administration. The city and the gas company agreed on an increase of 60 per cent and the utilities commission merely entered an order ratifying the agreement.

We are not enthusiastic over the prospect of a 20 per cent reduction in existing rates, since that would still leave an increase of 40 per cent, and apparently no relief from the exorbitant amount of gas which consumers are satisfied they have not used.

The temper of the people at this time demands some more satisfactory assurance than has been given them. They will be satisfied with nothing less than an opportunity to determine for themselves the advisability of a municipal plant.

France Today

It is interesting to watch the struggle now going on in France between the reactionary and progressive forces. Under Leon Dugues, leader of the monarchist forces, there is a possibility that the unspeakable Caillaux, defunct premier, may again return to power. The monarchists hope to thoroughly discredit the republic, and thus make a monarchy possible. For the first time in de-

bate in the halls of legislation the republicans admitted the gravity of the situation.

During the war France aroused the admiration of the world. She fought her armies abroad and traitors at home. Her mines were ruined, orchards destroyed, homes laid low, factories burned, roads down away with and people sold into slavery.

One out of every three of her available men was either killed or injured. Still she fought on with a courage that was truly magnificent, a courage that aroused the admiration of the world—including even her enemies.

Since the conclusion of the war the reactionaries apparently are in full swing. They defeated Clemenceau for the presidency. They knew they could never control the "tiger," so they eliminated him. They have saved the life of the "unspeakable Turk" for the sake of Turkish bonds owned in France, thereby repeating England's fatal mistake of the last century in keeping life in the "sick man of Europe," sowing the seeds of future wars and keeping Europe in a turmoil. France may get her interest, but there will be blood on every centime.

History repeats itself, the manikins on the Quai d'Orsay reiterate, and they hope to play the role of dictator in Europe once held by Louis XIV. With Admiral Horty they are encouraging a monarchy in Hungary, and favor an enlarged boundary for the Magyar nation. This, too, at the expense of the Czechoslovaks, the Jugos-Slavs and the Rumanians, who rendered such signal service to France in her hour of need. This is treachery inconceivable! That a certain class in France is meditating this shows to what depths men may descend. It does not lessen the crime that the ones who are planning this—and also planning to make Bavaria a kingdom again under the cruel and despicable Rupprecht—are the ones who did their utmost to bring about defeat of their own country.

The potency for evil of this course is patent to all. When the whole world is in dire need of peace the seeds of illimitable wars are being sown. Much water has run down hill since the Holy Roman alliance, and it can not be repeated. Nero fiddling while Rome was burning is not a circumstance to the silly, so-called statesmen who are playing with the league of nations as children play with new toys, while the whole world is in conflagration.

France fears Bolshevism, but she can not fight Bolshevism with monarchial reaction. It is too weak a stick. She is also aiding the cause as so much fuel. There is a crying need for that grand old nation to purge herself of the tempters and traitors within her fold, and return to the high ideals that once aroused the admiration of the world.

Guard Our Jewels.

Our national parks are the nation's gems. They are for our own use and to be transmitted intact as a precious heirloom to posterity. The people realize what a splendid heritage they possess and are using them more and more as time goes on. They belong to all the people. Last year 50,000 tourists visited Yellowstone park, 50,000 driving to the park in motor cars and camping out for from one week to the entire season. This holds true to a smaller degree of the other national parks that have been acquired in various parts of the country.

Constant vigilance is the price of happiness as well as success. We must be on our guard if we would safeguard this beauty. Vultures are already planning to wrest these beauty spots—all too few—from the people. Two bills are before congress, one of which will turn over to a private corporation for destruction and private gain a large area of Yellowstone park. Within this area are the most beautiful waterfalls and cascades. Here, too, are ideal camping grounds which will be killed beyond recall. All this to fatten private pockets.

One bill gives a corporation the right to dam Yellowstone lake and flood thousands of acres of meadow and forest in addition to many of the geysers and hot springs. Rare and curious rock formations with many fossils of incalculable scientific value will also have to go. A bill has already passed the senate which permits an Idaho corporation to dam the rivers of the southwestern corner of the park and thus destroy the glory of God's handiwork there.

The people are just beginning to appreciate their own crown jewels. The popularity of the motor car has brought them within living distance of all. In 1913 there were only 18,000 motor tourists in the park, the next year the number had doubled. This year 50,000 drank in the glories of one of the most beautiful spots in the world. Next year, if corporations with permit, the number of visitors will undoubtedly be over twice this large number. These visitors will return better Americans with a broader vision and a fuller knowledge of their country. Not only that, but they will be bettered in a physical way. They will come back radiant with health and with a vim and vigor that will do much to carry them through another year.

Were corporations to offer to destroy the capitol of the country for private gain there would arise a hue and cry that would echo and re-echo throughout the country. The capitol—beautiful as it is—can be replaced, but the beauties of our national parks, once lost, are gone forever. If a tourist defaces a stone formation, cuts down a tree or molests a wild animal or bird, he is at once fined from \$25 to \$100, or expelled from the park, or both; but it is proposed to give over thousands of acres of flowers, forests, glorious geysers, cascades, waterfalls and other world marvels, all for private gain. Will the people permit it?

## THE CONNOLLY FUND

Friends of Col. M. W. Connolly continue to remember him with their contributions to make his Christmas a cheerful occasion. The fund is deeply grateful for what has been done for him. The fund now amounts to \$356. Contributions received are as follows:

High Williams, Holbrook, Tenn.	\$25.00
Mrs. L. D. Hicks	5.00
Samuelson	10.00
Mrs. J. M. McCormack	2.00
Phillips Cotton Co.	5.00
Total	\$356.00

## QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS

Q—What skins are used in making Hudson seal coats?—E. H. G.

A—Hudson seal is a commercial term for dried muskrat from which the long dark hairs have been removed.

Q—Who voted for the Statute of Liberty?—L. M.

A—It is said that the artist, Frederick Bartholdi, modeled the statue from the nose of a Frenchman.

Q—Just what kind of a cat is a maitresse?—F. V.

A—This is a bluish gray variety of the domestic cat.

Q—Who was Rosinante?—D. C. D.

A—This was the name of Don Quixote's steed, raw, bony and full of blemishes, but regarded by his master as incomparable. "Rosinante" is a play on the Spanish word "rosin," meaning a good horse, a hack—and ante, meaning before.

Q—When were roller skates first made?—W. R.

A—The first roller skates patented were made in London in 1822. These and other models brought out later could be guided in curves only at the expense of enormous friction. It was not until 1856 that an American brought out a roller skate that many persons figures such as those possible on ice skates.

Q—What offices are within the gift of the president?—E. H. G.

A—Such offices are too many to enumerate. Among the federal offices filled by presidential appointment are: Cabinet officers, assistant secretaries, treasurer of the United States, director of the mint, comptroller of the treasury, chiefs of bureaus, United States judges, attorneys, ambassadors, ministers, collectors of federal taxes, employees of federal reserve bank, United States marshals and some classes of postmasters.

Q—Why can't a man become naturalized whose family is still in the old country?—C. N.

A—The naturalization bureau says that the courts require an alien to bring his family to this country before becoming naturalized, because they consider that leaving his family abroad shows lack of intention of becoming a citizen of the United States. The courts take the position that the naturalization of an alien whose family is not in the United States might enable him later to bring his family here without being inadmissible under the immigration laws.

Q—Where does Japan rank as a nation?—L. M.

A—Japan ranks third as to size of navy, only Great Britain and the United States taking precedence.

Q—Where was Tesla's tower and what was it?—H. H.

A—Tesla's tower was built at Shoreham, L. I., about 20 years prior to 1910, in which year it was destroyed by order of the United States government. It was 180 feet high, with a base of 100 feet. The tower was intended to be used in experimenting with transmission of electric energy for power, and also for wireless communication.

Q—What officer in the navy wears a mustache?—E. H. G.

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## YOUR CHILD AND OPPORTUNITY

You want to do the best you can for your child, of course. If you are making mistakes they are unintentional.

Now, let's think of this: Is his physical condition all it should be? Certainly the most important aid to success is a good physique.

The child who is not physically fit begins to be a failure at his toys, works under many handicaps in school, is likely to drop out before he has gone far toward success.

Do you know how to make sure there is nothing physically wrong with your child?

Let The News Scimitar through its Washington information bureau, send you a bulletin, entitled "The School Child's Health."

This will give you the best information in the world, it was compiled by the American Hygiene association and published by the American Red Cross. It is free.

Frederic J. Haskin, Director, The Memphis News Scimitar Information Bureau, Washington, D. C.

I enclose herewith 2 cents in stamps for return postage on a free copy of the booklet "The School Child's Health."

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Street \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

an anchor and silver leaf on his collar?

A—A commander in the navy wears this insignia on his collar.

Q—What kind of a government has Finland at present?—G. H. C.

A—Finland formerly a part of the Russian empire, is now an independent republic, proclaimed such on Dec. 6, 1917.

Q—What seaport has the greatest area of shipping docks?—L. E.

A—The port of Liverpool, England, probably has the largest area in shipping docks of any port in the world.

Q—If a rock were dropped from an airplane 5,000 feet in the air would it fall straight down?—L. E. M.

A—The rock would not fall straight down, but would curve when it started to fall.

Q—In 1853 the government coined nickels without the word "cents." How many of these were made?—C. D. R.

A—The office of the director of the mint informs us that in 1853 there were 4,759,519 pieces minted without the word "cents."

Q—What is the difference between a doughnut and a cruller?—E. P.

A—Years ago the difference was marked. A doughnut was made of raised bread dough, to which sugar, spice and raisins were added, while the cruller was made of a mixture containing baking powder or cream of tartar.

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## Somebody Is Always Taking The Joy Out Of Life—By Briggs

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## UNCLE WIGGLY AND THE CHRISTMAS CAKE.

(Copyright, 1920, by the McClure Newspaper Syndicate.)

BY HOWARD R. GARIS.

"Well, how that I can begin the Christmas tree in our hollow stump bungalow, so that I can begin trimming it, I suppose I must begin thinking about the Christmas cake."

"Uncle Wiggly," said the bunnies, "the morning as Uncle Wiggly came down to breakfast, the nice old gentleman bunny skipped from step to step, and he looked so happy."

"Stuffed and nonsense!" barked the Fox. "I'll take whatever I please, and then I'll nibble you!"

"Oh, ho! Niece, golden yellow corn meal!" exclaimed the bunnies. "Go he filled what was in the bag down his red throat and then, all of a sudden the fox howled:

"Oh woe! Oh, woe! Oh, my throat is on fire! I must run and get some water!"

"Mustard, eh? No wonder he howled!" laughed the bunnies. Then he helped Nurse Jane make the Christmas cake. And if the shock didn't tell itself in a hard knot, so that goldfish can't make a cat's cradle of it, I'll tell you next about Uncle Wiggly's Christmas stocking.

"During the busy hours of this day, Uncle Wiggly was particularly busy, according to astrology, the evening Venus is in benefic aspect."

The way is held most unluckily for those who desire to form, delays and even accidents being indicated. Aviation is particularly to be avoided under this planetary government for it will be unusually dangerous.

Women will not be fortunate to deal with while this configuration prevails, for it is supposed to make them capricious, changeable and fault-finding in business.

Evening should be a most auspicious time for theaters. Actresses will benefit from the friendly rays of Venus. A young girl will suddenly rise to eminence.

Love affairs are well directed at this time. The evening is particularly good for wedding, since it gives promise of young life with few and downs. Importers and dealers in luxuries should profit greatly today for the planet that encourages the buying of gewgaws for women also gives influence to commerce.

There is a sign read as most promising to organizations of social aim. Dances and other entertainments should be especially successful, since the stars are believed to impart a buoyancy of spirit and degrees of enjoyment to all who engage in them.

Increase in the number of all land-owners in the United States will be unprecedented in the coming year.

Beauty will be even more highly esteemed during the coming year than it has in the past, according to the stars, but its artificial aids will be discarded.

Persons whose birthdate is in May, June, July, August, September, October, November, December, will be lucky.

Children born on this day may be expected to attain a high position in the navy.

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